

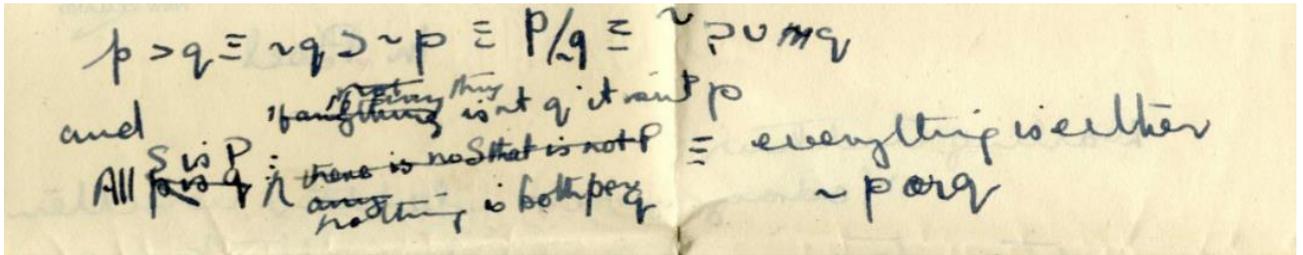
Letter from Mary to Arthur Prior, undated¹

In Bed

Darling Arthur,

Today your letter written on the train arrived, and that was ever so pleasant. I can think of Ahum² playing w. his toy animals and being good. As far as Timaru anyway. I hope the rest was as good. Today I've ploughed on through your notes; précised a chapter from Murchear³ (about 50–60 pp) and read an article on operationism.

Can you tell me just what {2} examiners mean by the prop calculus and the class calculus. Is it, roughly,⁴



And what wd be considered a proof of their relationship? Please answer [sic]

I had dinner at Beaths⁵ and ran into Maury there, so had it w. him. Tea I had in your room – sandwiches and a fishball from Olga Miles, and a fly cemetery,⁶ and 2 apples.

I left varsity about 8, and had a yarn w. Woofie⁷ and Maury when home, as I felt lonely. Then just as I took the milk jug down I ran into Harry⁸, just coming home, so he came {3} up. He returned a AJPP from Chas., and showed me a second woodcut by Seelye. Very nice. And now I've had a bath and am in bed. The clock has stopped, so I've no idea of the time, but I think it is late.

¹ This letter has been edited by Martin Prior, Peter Øhrstrøm and David Jakobsen. It is part of the Martin Prior Collection, presently kept at Aalborg University folder B, item 1-2. The letter is written on Canterbury University College Paper and the head has been crossed out. The letter must have been written between 1946, when Arthur got his position at Canterbury University and March 1949 when the building containing their flat burned down. Furthermore, the letters B1, item 1 to 4 was enclosed in an envelope (perhaps by Mary) postmarked 15th October 1947. The envelope is from Canterbury University College and addressed to Timaru where Mary's parents lived, while Mary was in Christchurch for her philosophy studies. It is quite likely that Prior would have visited them and picked up the letters from her parents. See also B1 items 1, 3 and 4.

² Editors' note: According to Martin, this is the way he pronounced his own name at that time.

³ Editors' note: It is uncertain who Murchear is.

⁴ Editors' note: Mary is at that time studying philosophy, including logic, and is putting a technical question to Arthur.

⁵ Editors' note: Beaths was a department store in Christchurch.

⁶ Editors' note: A fruit slice, well known in New Zealand. Olga Miles was a delicatessen in Christchurch Cathedral Square.

⁷ Editors' note: According to Martin Prior, Woofie is Wolfgang Rosenberg, lecturer in economics at Canterbury, his wife Ann (née Eichelbaum) was at school in Wellington with Mary before her parents shifted to Timaru where her father Frank Wilkinson took up a post as a Presbyterian Minister. Wolfgang Rosenberg became a very well-known economist in New Zealand putting forward alternative economic policies in the 1980s and later, in opposition to the neo liberal policies then developed by both parties.

⁸ Editors' note: According to Martin Prior, this is probably Harry Hill, who was a radio commentator in one of the Christchurch radio stations.

The only mail so far has been something from Woofie, wh. I forward, and also a circular to Staff. I'll forward.

Kisses to the boy as well as to my Arthur

Mary

P.S. Love to Nancy etc.⁹

P.P.S. You really ought to take M. up to Gran's when you can (if you haven't)[.]¹⁰

⁹ Editors' note: Nancy is the late wife of Martin Prior's Godfather Lloyd Geering. Martin Prior believes that she was at school with Mary at some stage. She died in 1949 of tuberculosis. They lived in the Opoho, a northern suburb in Dunedin. In the 1960s he was subject to a heresy trial by the New Zealand Presbyterian Church for doubts in connection with the resurrection – and in fact the case was dismissed before a final outcome.

¹⁰ Editors' note: According to Martin Prior, Gran is Mary's maternal grandmother, widow of Andrew Cameron, one time Vice-Chancellor of Otago University, Dunedin.